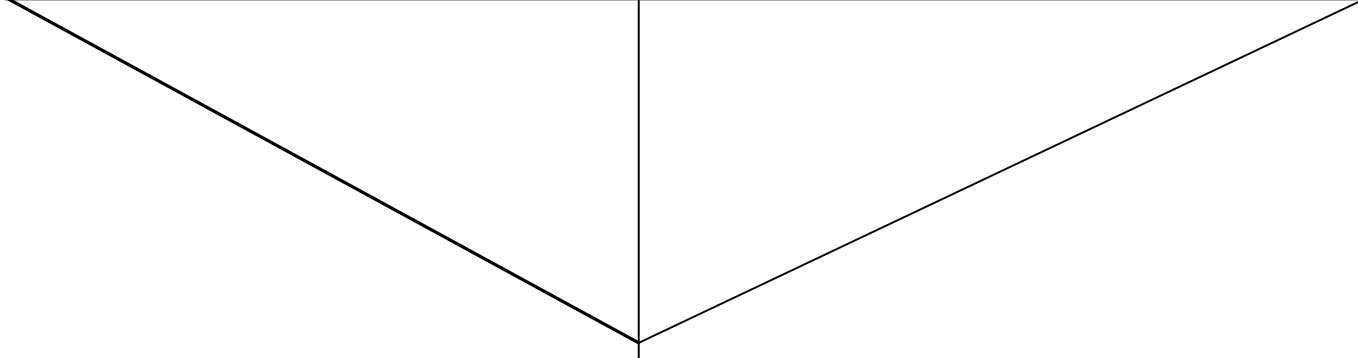
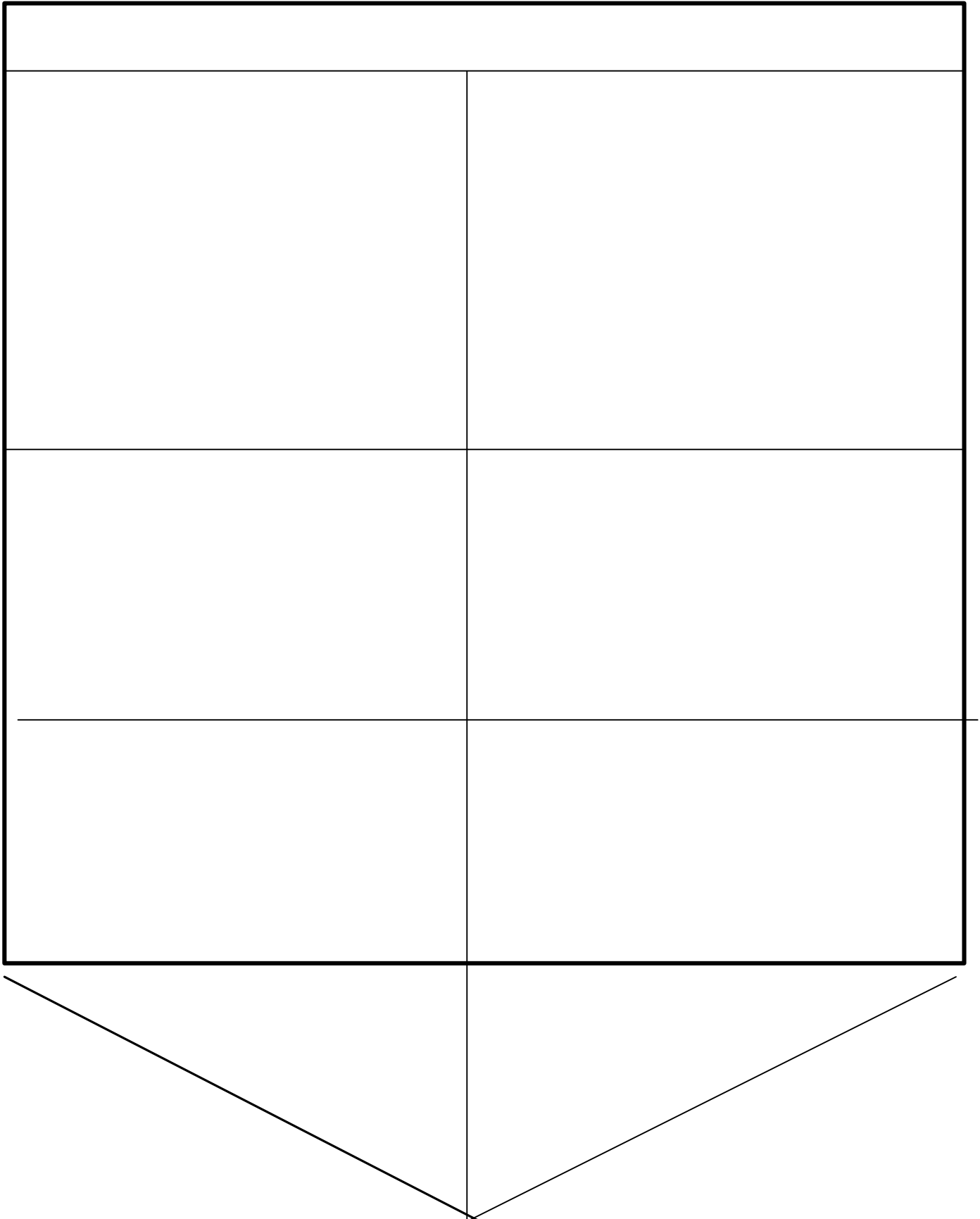


# ***Your Teaching Coat of Arms***

<b>First/Last Name</b>	
<p>What is something you are very good at when teaching?</p>       <p><b><i>Draw a picture.</i></b></p>	<p>What is one value, a deep commitment to teaching from which you would never budge?</p>       <p><b><i>Draw a symbol or logo.</i></b></p>
<p>What is the teaching tool (technological, concrete, or other) that you find most helpful in the classroom?</p> <p><b><i>Draw one picture.</i></b></p>	<p>On a scale of one to ten, with one being terrible and ten being incredible, what number would you choose to describe Your first year of teaching?</p> <p><b><i>Write a number.</i></b></p>
<p>What three words best describe your first year of teaching?</p>    <p><b><i>Write the three words,</i></b></p>	<p>What three words would you most like to have said about you as a teacher when you complete this school year?</p>    <p><b><i>Write the three words here.</i></b></p>



# ***Your Teaching Coat of Arms***



## Profiling Ourselves . . . Teachers as Researchers

**Purposes:** This activity works well at the beginning of a session because it allows new participants to become acquainted. The activity takes participants through a series of data collection activities in which they practice taking notes from their own observations, from artifacts, and from interviews. Since this activity focuses on collecting descriptive evidence, looking for patterns within the evidence in order to form generalizations, and verifying expectations and generalizations, it relates to both the portfolio scoring process and the process of collecting and analyzing data in order to learn more about learners.

### Procedures:

#1: Participants partner with someone they do not know well. They sit with their partner and have paper and pen in hand.

#2: Without talking to the partner, each participant takes descriptive notes while observing his/her partner. Consider appearance, mannerisms, behaviors that seem to suggest personality traits and attributes. 3-5 mins.

#3: Without talking, each partner selects 3 artifacts that reveal something significant about him(her)self. Give these to the partner. The partner makes a few notes about his/her assumptions and expectations from these artifacts. 3-5 mins.

#4: On the basis of the artifact and observational notes, each person makes a few predictions about the partner. Then, in order to verify these predictions, create 3 interview questions that the participant would like to ask his/her partner. 3 mins.

#5: Each participant now writes a story about his/her most powerful “professional” learning experience within the past year. What was it, why was it so meaningful, what was learned? (This will be shared with partners.) 10 mins.

#6: In pairs, participants share their stories with each other. Partners may read these aloud, if they wish, but they should not discuss anything about themselves with each other yet. 10 mins.

#7: Individually, each participant writes a brief explanation of expectations that he/she has about this partner as a teacher/colleague based on the evidence collected. 10 mins.

#8: Share the profiles with each other. Use interview questions to verify predictions. 10 mins.

#9: Introduce each other to the larger group.

### Process the Activity:

- How was it valuable for learning about each other?
- What parts were more / less comfortable? Why?
- How did the activity model effective research strategies? (Includes multiple data sources and opportunities to verify information and increase reliability)
- How did the activity model the portfolio evaluation process? (Includes multiple data sources, focuses on collecting descriptive evidence and looking for patterns across multiple data sources)

## **If I had a learning classroom (school) . . .**

**Imagine that you are teaching in the learning classroom (school) you would design if you had complete freedom and control. Think through, in your mind, the experience of being in that classroom. Ask yourself:**

- **What are students doing on a typical day?**
- **What structures, practices, or behaviors (on my part and the schools' part) help these students thrive and succeed?**
- **How are the instructional activities – the lessons, assignments, and conversations – organized? Who organizes them? Who decides when they stop and start?**
- **Who makes the necessary decisions about students' learning goals and performance expectations – and what kinds of decisions are they typically making?**
- **How do students interact with one another inside this classroom? (Do they engage one another in solving problems and working together? How do they help one another learn?)**
- **How do they interact with the teacher?**
- **What kinds of information do I, as the teacher, convey directly to students?**
- **What kinds of information do they get from reading (and what do they read to find it)?**
- **What kinds of information do they get from learning experiences (and what kinds of experiences do they have)?**

**This activity could be used as a way to help beginning teachers think about their visions of an effective learning classroom. Sometimes teachers' visions of a learning environment and the actual environment that exists might not match. If beginning teachers make their visions explicit early in the seminar series, then it might be easier for them to reflect on the various ways that their own classrooms do or do not match their vision. Such conversations might guide the conversations that mentors have with the beginning teachers during this first year.**

**This activity can be used prior to examining what the teaching standards reveal about effective learning environments for English language arts classrooms and “best practices” in reading and writing classrooms.**

From “Designing a Learning Classroom” in *Schools That Learn: A Fifth Discipline Fieldbook for Educators, Parents, and Everyone Who Cares About Education* (2000) by Peter Senge, Nelda Cambron-McCabe, Timothy Lucas, Bryan Smith, Janis Dutton, and Art Kleiner. New York, NY: Doubleday, p. 106.